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Carter Urges Kindness for Science Budgets

Little noted in the Washington stampede to champion frugality is that basic research — perhaps alone of all federal activities — has been singled out by Jimmy Carter for an exemption from parsimony.

How this will affect the budget-whacking mood in Congress is yet to be seen, since the appropriations bills that encompass most federal R&D activities are yet to emerge from the mill. But the record shows that while Carter has been striving to stress fiscal conservatism in the latest revamping of his image, he has, indeed, been urging the Congress to be especially kind to basic research.

Thus, in June, after several mishaps befell basic research items in Congress, Carter wrote to several key Congressmen that the budget he sent to the Capitol in January reflected the findings of a review that he had ordered into the adequacy of federal support for basic research. "As a result of that review," he stated, "I determined that the Nation's investment in basic research

director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Noting that the President was leaning on Congress to be kind to basic research in the 1979 budget, the two White House aides urged their Administration colleagues to carry forth this charitable attitude in planning budgets for the period 1980-82.

"Because of the President's policy to reduce the budget deficit," they stated, "the overall agency planning ceilings developed for FY 1980-82 are stringent. Despite these tight constraints, we believe that it is important to reemphasize the Administration's concern for the funding of basic research. It is the policy of this Administration," they continued, "to assure effective support of basic or long-term research, particularly to provide a better basis for decision-making or for dealing with long-term national problems.

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had fallen far too low over the past decade. In my budget message to Congress," he continued, "I recommended total obligations of \$3.6 billion, which represents a real rate growth of almost five per cent for Fiscal Year 1979. I believe this encouragement and support for basic research by the Federal Government is essential for the discoveries and technological innovations fundamental to our economic well-being and to our national security."

To which he added: "As the Congress considers final funding levels for R&D programs, I want to emphasize that even relatively small reductions in key agencies — such as the National Science Foundation — or in new initiatives and growth planned for the mission agencies — including NASA and the Departments of Agriculture, Energy, and Defense — would defeat our objectives. Modest increments of real growth in these programs are necessary," he warned, "if we are to strengthen the Nation's capacity and productivity in critical areas of research."

While waiting for the unpredictabilities of Congress to emerge, the theme of protecting basic research budgets was boosted in a memo to department and agency heads by James T. McIntyre, director of the Office of Management and Budget, and Frank Press,

In Brief

Preliminary plans call for a start-up budget of about \$50 million for the Foundation for International Technological Cooperation that the Administration announced last spring (SGR Vol. VIII, No. 8). To be attached to the Agency for International Development, the Foundation is now being planned by a group headed by Ralph Smuckler, dean of International Studies at Michigan State University. The Foundation is intended to promote R&D cooperation with developing countries.

The people who work for White House Science Adviser Frank Press note with appreciation that though the workload is oppressive and the hours are long, Press has urged them all to get away for summer vacations, and there have been very few difficulties in scheduling time off. Which is not the way it is in some other corners of the workaholic Carter White House.

Generally ignored in the big stir over Gio Gori of the National Cancer Institute suggesting that some cigarettes are relatively safe is that he said the same in a *Science* article in 1976, and no fuss ensued. This time, however, his article was leaked to the press, though not by Gori, prior to publication in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The lesson, of course, is that leaks get more attention than plain old open publication or official announcements.

... Agencies Told to Protect Basic Research

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"In developing your 1980 budget, you are asked to give careful consideration to the support of basic or long-term research so that the research and development programs of your agency are appropriately balanced to meet long and short-term national needs."

Carter must be credited with a presidential first for having his Administration single out basic research as perhaps the only area to be excluded from Washington's recurring bouts of feverish budget cutting. About the only fault that can be found with the McIntyre-Press memo is that rather than earmarking specific funds for basic research, it implicitly suggests that if money is tight all around, other areas should be squeezed to keep basic research in good health. That suggestion merits an honored place in the political archives of science, but, as a practical matter, it's only a bit better than useless. The reason, of course, is that there's not much left for squeezing in a period when inflation is high and growth in the federal budget is low. This is not to suggest that the lipid count is low in federal activities. But every federal activity, without exception, is overcome these days with self-pity for its financial plight, and, in alliance with Congressional friends and outside clients, is determined to get and hold all it can get. The notion of trimming this or that so that basic research can have a relatively healthy growth rate — well, that simply won't find any takers outside the ranks of basic research.

Nevertheless, given science's enduring persecution complex, it's nice to know that the President and his top budget and science advisers are in harmony on the value of basic research. In this matter, Frank Press is the hero, for he's the one who has long and patiently persuaded the inner circles at the White House that basic research is a valuable activity that's hurting for lack of a bit of additional assistance. Now that Press has accomplished that, his next task is to get some money to accompany the good wishes. This is all the more important now that a sudden surge in the rate of inflation is eating away at the five per cent increase that was planned for the coming fiscal year. —DSG

Competitive Ag Funds in Doubt

The Administration's quest to continue competition in the award of Department of Agriculture research grants is up in the air at this point, with the House having denied the \$30-million request, while the Senate has given its approval. The matter will be resolved in a conference on the \$23.3 billion Agriculture and Rural Development appropriations bill.

The \$30 million for competitive research grants is a relatively small item in that overall appropriation, but it represents a major departure in policies for awarding agricultural research money, which until this year were handed out on a "formula" basis — a euphemism for keeping the agriculture labs going, regardless of their performance. This system has obvious appeal for Congressional friends of the labs, which accounts for longstanding political opposition to any change. In fact, the present \$15 million for competitive awards is a milestone in the politics of agricultural research, which one review after another has faulted for backwardness and poor productivity — both of which have been attributed to a system that automatically continues to dole out the money.

Symposium to Honor Teague

A National Science Policy Symposium, honoring retiring Rep. Olin D. Teague (D-Texas), chairman of the House Science and Technology Committee, will be held September 16 at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas. Speakers will include Frank Press, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; Russell Peterson, director of the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, and Norman Hackerman, chairman of the National Science Board. Chairman of the symposium is former Congressman Emilio Q. Daddario, chairman of the board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

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Contributing Editor
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Editor and Publisher
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Useless Reports Dept: NSF Board Hits Again

Gluttons for data concerning the fiscal minutiae of the federal research enterprise, its programs, ambitions, anxieties and hallucinations, will feast on a blockbuster production of the National Science Board, *Basic Research in the Mission Agencies: Agency Perspectives on the Conduct and Support of Basic Research*.

A 405-page volume, based mainly on returns from questionnaires distributed to virtually every federal office that has anything to do with research, the report obviously kept an enormous number of people very busy for a long time, and it will obviously be mined for footnotes and citations by the not inconsiderable pack of bureaucrats, academics, and others (SGR included) that occupies itself with detailing and analyzing the ups and downs of research in the US.

However, apart from fueling this fast-breeder system, it is not clear why presumably scarce federal dollars — there's no counting up what went into the preparation of this tome — were made available for what is just another go-round of budget lists, complaints about red tape, inventories of programs, self-serving descriptions, implausible expositions of how R&D purchasing power is down to the 1968 level, and endless explanations of the difficulties involved in distinguishing between basic research and other varieties. To our devoted readers at the Office of Management and Budget, we say: Look into this.

But, to go on. The National Science Board, a body of established and aspiring statesmen of science situated atop, but only nominally in control of, the National Science Foundation, is one of those parttime — expenses only — federal creations whose disappearance would not be easily noted.

Having little of importance to do, but rooted in a statute that would be difficult to change, the Board mainly confines itself to pestering the fulltime NSF bureaucracy at monthly or so meetings — and it issues reports. The best of these are the every-other-year *Science Indicator* series, which usefully pull together data on various quantifiable aspects of research, such as papers published, money spent, people employed, and so forth. But even this series is beginning to provoke some impatience, what with its emphasis on what goes into science and its failure, with few exceptions, to quantify what comes out.

In alternate years, the Board publishes an annual report that deals with one thing or another of close concern to NSF. The latest volume is in the alternate-year category, and as an exercise in flogging the obvious, dishing up warmed-over reports, and repeating past recommendations, it is both comprehensive and flawless.

Thus, on the basis of "submissions" from 16 major agencies and an assortment of their subsidiaries, the report concludes that "Perhaps the broadest generalization that can be made is that agencies have difficulty making a sharp distinction between basic and applied research."

But even allowing for this discovery, the authors state, "it is still possible . . . to make some general observations on accomplishments, trends, problems, and issues concerning basic research supported by the federal government."

The first of these is: "Basic research is useful." The report backs up this assertion by noting that "Federally supported basic research has produced and continues to produce significant additions to scientific knowledge that are or promise to be of high potential in addressing national problems and concerns."

Since there's no one left on earth, including Senator Proxmire, who would contend that basic research is useless, there is some mystery as to why this massive inquiry chooses to proclaim what no one would dispute.

In any case, the next general observation is that, while federal dollars for basic research have risen greatly since 1968, the growth hasn't kept pace with inflation, and spending obligations this year "are five per cent lower in constant dollars than 1968 obligations."

This has been said so often that it generally goes by unnoticed. However, the question of whether it's true or not does deserve notice — especially since there's a lot of evidence that suggests that it may not be true.

The year 1968 was an especially fat one in academic science, what with the space program putting a lot of money into academe and various other government activities pouring in support. Then came a sudden plateau, as the Nixon Administration cut back on science support. A lot of well-publicized difficulties then ensued, but, by many accounts — including some based on studies supported by NSF — the scientific community generally weathered the situation by cutting back on non-science frills. Let's look at some of NSF's own numbers, though they are not included in this behemoth report that purports to tell us what's going on in basic research: In 1969, 12,084 dissertations were published; the projected figure for this year is 17,758, and that's after a decade of serious inflation. Over that same 10-year period, the annual number of scientific and technical articles published rose from 135,596 to a projected 165,312. Even allowing for needless multiple publication, there's probably a respectable amount of growth in those figures. Quite

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In Quotes: R&D and Organizational Rigidity

One of the sagest and most persistent observers of the relationship among research, health care, and politics is Stephen P. Strickland, a political scientist who, after filling many other roles, is now vice president of the Aspen Institute of Humanistic Studies. Author of two widely admired works on health-related affairs, *Politics, Science and Dread Disease* and *US Health Care: What's Right and What's Wrong?*, Strickland has just published a new and penetrating work, *Research and the Health of Americans* (162 p. \$16, Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Co., 125 Spring St., Lexington, Mass. 02173). The following excerpts are from the new book:

The expansion of the scientific knowledge base and the growth of the health-research enterprise have had two inevitable and related results. First, they have led to further specialization on the part of biomedical scientists and physicians. Second, they have led to a somewhat rigid institutionalization of processes for deciding what research to support, and the assignment for making such decisions to categorical specialists. Yet one of the most important lessons of recent advances relates to the unity of the biomedical sciences, the interdependence of various scientific specialties, and the relationships of socio-environmental factors to conditions of health. The question is whether present organizational structures and decision-making mechanisms facilitate links between scientific disciplines and encourage the

exploration of new pathways.

Careful reviews do not produce encouragement in this regard. Just as all health-program budgets are not considered simultaneously in the budgetary process, so the substance of health-research programs, scattered among several agencies and departments, are not simultaneously reviewed. And within single agencies, judgments on quality and importance of proposed scientific projects are rendered in the context of categorical and traditional subspecialties of biology and medicine. Further, the predominant emphasis is on the pursuit of scientific remedies to disease problems, with little encouragement of pursuit of knowledge that will lead to the prevention of disease and the maintenance of good health.

Recent patterns suggest that only after scientific nonconformists, or political activists, stimulated public campaigns have science support agencies turned their attention to such critically important areas as nutrition, environmental pollution, and connections between sociocultural factors and health states.

Neither governmental reorganization nor wholesale changes in science review mechanisms are likely to produce magically beneficial results. The challenge is to ensure that traditional organizational arrangements do not so strongly reinforce scientific and bureaucratic conservatism that scientific advance, like budget-making, is foredoomed to be a marginally incremental process.

RESEARCH SUPPORT

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clearly, the resources available for research today far exceed those of 1968 — no matter how NSF fiddles the figures.

Anyway, *Agency Perspectives* follows the unsubstantiated cries of penury with page after page of boiler plate that the agencies provided to show what they're doing in the realm of research. The main exception is where the agencies, faced with a request for information that might be turned against them — the Administration is always pressing them to spend more on basic research — employ obfuscating verbiage to cover their sins.

Thus, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, whose research programs have done little to assist housing or urban development, excuses itself as follows:

"The scale and urgency of the day-to-day problems HUD faces make it necessary — and inevitable — that its research programs be primarily focused on policy-relevant projects of applied research. With a relatively modest budget (\$55 million for FY 1977), it has not been possible, however desirable, to address more fundamental questions of housing and community development, except as a subsidiary part of applied research projects, or except when applied work could not proceed without development of more basic knowledge." (It might be noted that HUD's "modest" \$55 million is about \$12 million more than all of NSF's spending for support of chemistry research).

In conclusion, we merely note the arrival of this catchall collection of uncritically accepted reports on what's going on in federal support of basic research.

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Test-Ban Foes Invent New Reason for Tests

Controversy over attainment of a complete nuclear test-ban — long the most cherished goal of the arms-control wing of the scientific community — has entered a new phase as the anti's take up positions behind a new and emotion-arousing argument: That a ban on testing would prevent the US from periodically verifying whether its nukes are holding up well in storage.

Intrinsic to this argument, of course, is the assumption that even under the present 150-kiloton threshold ban, which the US has been observing though it hasn't yet been ratified, tests related to storage survival have been taking place. The Department of Energy's bomb builders and testers have been feeding this nuclear red meat to an assortment of anti-ban commentators, and as is the case with such matters, the "need to test" is now being peddled to the public as synonymous with survival of the US nuclear deterrent.

The main difficulty with this contention, however, is that the US weapons establishment has, in fact, shown little past interest in popping off stockpile samples to verify their shelflife survival. No matter, for the sophists of the weapons-building and testing establishment have come up with a counter to that, as is evidenced by testimony delivered August 14 to the House Armed Services Committee by Donald Kerr, an acting Assistant Secretary of DOE, which runs the weapons labs for the Department of Defense.

"The fact that we rarely conduct 'proof' tests — that is specific individual tests of a weapon pulled from the stockpile — is sometimes cited as evidence that testing is not necessary to maintain confidence in the reliability of the stockpile," he said. "This claim is false. We use the continuing testing program to confirm the design choices made in stockpile weapons, we reuse the tested technology of weapons in the stockpile in designing new weapons systems; if we encounter a stockpile problem, we may 'proof' test its solution by adding an experiment to a test that is part of the continuing program. In effect, 'proof' testing is built into the very philosophy on which our testing program is based," Kerr concluded.

Kerr's testimony was followed several days later by a rejoinder from Senator Edward Kennedy, who, in a floor statement, said, "Not only do these statements undercut the President's policy, but they amount to a gross misrepresentation of the implications of a CTB (Comprehensive Test Ban) for our national security."

In this, as in so many other matters, the President's "policy" is in the eye of the beholder, as may be seen in the fact that Mr. Carter has spoken warmly of the CTB, while a senior official of the Department of Energy tells Congress it's a dreadful, dangerous idea.

Be that as it may, Kennedy accompanied his floor

statement with a letter of support signed by three scientists who have been intimately involved with weapons testing for decades:

Norris Bradbury, director of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory from 1945 to 1970; Richard Garwin, the ubiquitous IBM Fellow, who has been a Los Alamos consultant since 1950, and J. Carson Mark, head of the Los Alamos Theoretical Division from 1947 to 1973. Their views were endorsed by Hans Bethe, a doyen of nuclear bombcraft from the founding days of Los Alamos, which has long been the spawning ground for design and testing of this nation's nuclear arsenal.

Addressed to President Carter, the letter that Kennedy unveiled stated: "As you know, the assurance of continued operability of stockpiled weapons has in the past been achieved almost exclusively by non-nuclear testing — by meticulous inspection and disassembly of the components of the nuclear weapons, including their firing and fuzing equipment. Problems encountered in this inspection are normally validated by additional sampling and solved by the remanufacture of the affected components. . . It has been exceedingly rare for a weapon to be taken from stockpile and fired 'for assurance.'"

The authors of the letter continued, "It has also been rare to the point of non-existence for a problem revealed by the sampling and inspection program to

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Ex-NASA Head on OTA Council

James T. Fletcher, head of NASA from 1971 to 1977 and now a professor at the University of Pittsburgh, has been appointed a member of the Technology Assessment Advisory Council, the top advisory body of the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment. At the same time Council Chairman Jerome Wiesner, who is President of MIT, was reappointed to another four-year term, as was Frederick Robbins, dean of the medical school at Case Western Reserve University.

The appointments would normally be small stuff in the comings and goings of Washington's science-policy mandarins. But with OTA, under its new director, Russell Peterson, striving to overcome a lot of Congressional skepticism that was generated during its first few years, the willingness to serve of these highly regarded three is a plus for the rebuilding drive.

Announcement of the appointments was accompanied by statements of effusive praise from OTA Board Chairman Edward Kennedy, Vice Chairman Rep. Larry Winn (R-Kans.), and OTA Director Russell Peterson.

... Test Ban Could be Politically Expensive

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require (original italics) a nuclear test for its resolution."

Conceding that improvements in weapons performance would be shackled by a ban on testing, the three scientists noted that "We have participated in such [improvement] programs and find them both interesting and useful," but they carefully omitted that they found them important for significantly improving weapons performance. Rather, they went on to state the presumably "improved" but untested weapons could produce uncertainties about reliability. The solution, then, they suggested, "would be to forego such programs in order not to sacrifice stockpile reliability to a desire for minor improvements in performance."

In response to the old argument that removal of opportunities to test nuclear explosives would cause US lab workers to trickle off to other jobs while their Soviet counterparts could be commanded to stay in place, Bradbury, Garwin and Marks wrote that "We see no reason to assume that the national security bureaucracy will not continue to serve the national interest, and we would welcome a statement in conjunction with a CTB Treaty that non-nuclear testing, inspection, and remanufacture where necessary will be fully supported in order to ensure the continued operability of stockpiled nuclear weapons."

In connection with this last point, Garwin, at a press briefing organized by the Federation of American Scientists, remarked that an exodus of old blood from the weapons labs might not be such a bad thing.

The argument over storage survival must be looked at in the context of what's happened to the old argument concerning verification. For years, the anti's were happily contending that, while the US would surely observe a test-ban agreement, the Soviets could get away with cheating. That argument has now been washed away by advances in seismic detection capabilities that assure that even if the Soviets could set off an occasional clandestine blast — perhaps masked by an earthquake, as the worst-case scenario writers warn us — they could not surreptitiously pull off the kinds of series of tests that both we and they have found to be indispensable for big jumps in weapons capabilities. With the cheating argument thus disposed of, the last-ditch fall back position has become verification of the stockpile, a process that has suddenly been elevated to a place of importance that it never held when the bomb testers were free to do as they pleased.

The unresolved matter is what Jimmy Carter will decide. Long committed to a comprehensive test ban, there can be little doubt that he sees through the

DOE Aids Minority Institutions

Some crumbs from the teeming R&D budget of the Department of Energy have been allocated to one of the more neglected sectors of the academic community — research in minority colleges and universities. Though the amount is small — \$600,000 spread among eight so-called Black institutions — the policy symbolism isn't, since most federal R&D agencies, with occasional exceptions, shy away from the notion that they have a responsibility to assist the have-nots of academe.

The awards, according to John M. Deutch, DOE's director of energy research, represent "the first step in DOE's effort to broaden the involvement of minority schools in our Nation's energy research effort."

Apart from whatever research may be produced by these awards, the DOE move has the added value of enlarging the constituency for the agency's money. For, as has long been demonstrated in R&D politics, the taste for continuing sums is easily acquired, and their acquisition is eagerly pursued, through political channels, if necessary.

The batch of eight, selected from among 26 minority institutions that submitted research proposals in response to a DOE notice issued last January, are:

Tuskegee Institute (\$100,000); Atlanta University (\$50,000); North Carolina Central University (\$85,000); Jackson State University (\$50,000); Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas (\$67,000); Howard University (\$100,300); North Carolina A&T State University (\$99,000), and Texas Southern University (\$51,000).

nonsense that's been conjured up by the hardliners. But Carter is aiming to look tough, especially on national security issues that involve trusting the Soviets. In terms of political payoff, a decision to push for a comprehensive ban will inspire a bit of gratitude, but mainly from people who realize that, in regard to rational arms policies, Carter is as good as this country's politics will permit. On the other hand, a complete test ban is vulnerable to a massive and scurrilous campaign of misrepresentation from the right as well as from other parts of the political spectrum. And, with Carter's political fortunes constantly sinking, he may just decide that a comprehensive test ban, while desirable for various reasons, might be too politically expensive for him to afford.

Case Study: Tobacco Lobby Wins Again in Senate

Beyond providing a bit of money for the government's token "war" against cigarette smoking — \$6 million for anti-smoking propaganda and \$20 million for research into the psychology of smoking — Congress has no stomach for taking on the tobacco lobby.

Its timidity in this matter was nicely illustrated August 10 on the Senate floor when Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI) introduced an amendment to eliminate from an agricultural appropriations bill \$3.1 million earmarked for "tobacco production research."

"What the amendment does," Pell said, "is put the Senate firmly on the record as being opposed to spending taxpayers' dollars on a tobacco production research program whose thrust is to increase the yield of a plant which has been verified as a severe health hazard to the public." Noting that the federal government is officially committed to assisting the public in kicking the cigarette habit, Pell said it was senseless to promote production of the very substance whose use had been condemned by the government's own health officials.

To the defense of the research program sprang Senator Walter Huddleston (D-Ky.), who, as was noted in the course of the debate, is the "spokesman for burley tobacco farmers in the Senate." Though his colleague from Rhode Island was obviously well-intentioned, said Huddleston, he was also, unfortunately, misinformed. "Although it is called production research," he said, in reference to the \$3.1 million item, "virtually all of it is directly related to developing a leaf that would eliminate whatever harmful properties are determined to be involved." What was called production research, said the Senator from Kentucky, was, in fact, health-related research, a cause that should command the support of all legislators.

To which Senator Henry Bellmon (R-Okla.) countered by introducing a list of the projects that would be supported by the appropriation. Brief titles of research can indeed be misleading as to what the potential or intent of a given project may be, but allowing for that, it would appear that the overall title "tobacco production research" reflects a group of activities primarily concerned with the problems of tobacco production, as, for example: "Research to develop methods and equipment to evaluate tobacco quality before processing," and "Research on growth regulation to facilitate mechanized harvesting methods."

Bellmon, who supported the Pell amendment, noted that there was a separate item in the bill, of \$2.2 million, for "research on health and safety aspects," and suggested that he was skeptical of the contention that "production research" was a misnomer for health research. Furthermore, he noted, tobacco production

was booming, having risen from 1.8 billion pounds in 1965 to 2.1 billion in 1976. Government expenditures in behalf of even higher productivity, he said, were scarcely in order when the government was on record against the consumption of tobacco.

Next up was Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), who paid homage to Huddleston's valor against the anti-smoking movement. "Time and again the able Senator from Kentucky has stood firm in his defense of tobacco farmers, and his help to me has been invaluable . . . We share a willingness to go to every proper length to defend tobacco, and to protect the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of tobacco farmers in his State and mine."

Helms was followed by Senator Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.), who, confessing himself to be a pack-and-a-half-a-day man, said he sided with Pell, and felt that federal policy was "duplicious." But, he said, introducing an element that was to help turn the tide against Pell, he was going to hold hearings next year — under the auspices of the Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee — that would call in "any and all experts" to lay out the facts on tobacco. Since there's nothing like a promise of an exhaustive study to delay action on even exhaustively studied matters, the Pell amendment was thus doomed at that point. But to make certain, a couple of other Senators from tobacco land piled on their assurances that "production" research had been misunderstood by the Senator from Rhode Island.

Pell then politely said that he accepted the Senators' assurances about the true nature of the \$3.1 million item, and withdrew his amendment.

NSF Seeks Award Nominations

The National Science Foundation invites nominations for its fourth annual Alan T. Waterman Award, which comes not only with a medal but also up to \$50,000 a year for as long as three years of research or advanced study. The prize-with-a-grant is limited to US citizens no older than 35 who have demonstrated star quality in research. Named after NSF's founding director, it was established as evidence of the Foundation's concern for younger researchers. Nominations should be submitted before Dec. 31 to the Alan T. Waterman Award Committee, National Science Foundation, Washington, DC 20550. The award will be made in May.

Rep. Rogers' Retirement Creates a Big Gap

Rep. Paul Rogers' decision to conclude his 24-year Congressional career at the end of this session is bitter news for Administration officials concerned with health and the life sciences. For example, Donald Kennedy, Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, who was counting on Rogers to shepherd drug regulation reform legislation through the House, told SGR that the impending departure "is a disaster."

At this point, there is no certainty as to who will succeed the Florida Democrat as chairman of the Health and the Environment Subcommittee of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee. The leading contender, Rep. Richardson Preyer (D-NC), wants the job, but since he's a big shareholder in Richardson-Merrell Pharmaceuticals — a major drug manufacturer — the conflict-of-interest aroma would be too strong for even the House of Representatives to bear. Preyer, in fact, has removed himself from any involvement in drug regulation reform. One report has it that he'll propose that drugs be removed from the subcommittee's jurisdiction, but that accommodation is not likely to be favored by his subcommittee colleagues, who reap much attention from their sway over pharmaceutical matters. Furthermore, if drugs are snipped from the subcommittee's jurisdiction, the most likely place of transfer would be to Rep. Dan Rostenkowski's Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, which has long been the slaughtering

grounds for various cost-containment bills proposed by the Administration. The latest victim was HEW Secretary Califano's hospital cost-containment bill, which Rostenkowski and company have rendered into a meaningless voluntary-compliance measure. The Administration, of course, has virtually no voice in the internal affairs of the House, but re-ordering a subcommittee jurisdiction to meet the special needs of an aspiring chairman is so unusual that House tradition, abetted by a few whispers from the White House, could easily thwart any such move.

In terms of seniority, which counts less and less in awarding chairmanships in the unruly House, the man behind Rogers is Rep. David Satterfield (D-Va.), Satterfield, however, is an antediluvian conservative, and his colleagues have previously blocked his accession to a subcommittee chairmanship.

In making his departure announcement, last June, Rogers, age 57, merely said that he wants to do something else, but he didn't say what, nor has he since. Mystery being the grist of Washington rumor mills, it is now being speculated (a) that Califano will succeed Griffin Bell as Attorney General and Rogers will become Secretary of HEW, or (b) that Rogers will set up shop in Washington and capitalize on his expertise in an area that abounds with the best of all combinations for the capital's bigtime lawyers: big money and regulatory controversy.

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